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Forests: progress, challenges and the way forward for the international arrangement on forests

Report of the first meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests

(Nairobi, 24-28 February 2014)

Summary

Pursuant to paragraph 8 of resolution 10/2, adopted by the United Nations Forum on Forests at its tenth session (see E/2013/42, chap. I.B), the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests will hold no more than two meetings before the eleventh session of the Forum, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources. The first meeting of the Expert Group was held in Nairobi, from 24 to 28 February 2014. The present report thereon will be made available to the Expert Group at its second meeting.

* E/CN.18/2015/1.

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I. Background

1. By paragraph 8 of resolution 10/2, adopted by the United Nations Forum on Forests, at its tenth session, the Forum decided to establish an Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests, tasked with reviewing the performance and effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests within the context of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49 and the attainment of the multi-year programme of work of the Forum for the period 2007-2015. The Expert Group will review the input provided by various stakeholders during the intersessional period and, on the basis of that review, propose a set of recommendations, providing a strategic direction on the function and institutional arrangements of the international arrangement on forests for the period beyond 2015, to the Forum at its eleventh session, to be held in New York from 4 to 15 May 2015.

II. Organizational and other matters

A. Venue and duration of the meeting

2. The first meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests was held in Nairobi, from 24 to 28 February 2014.

B. Opening of the meeting

3. The meeting was opened by the Chair of the Bureau of the eleventh session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, Macharia Kamau (Kenya), who then invited Judi Wangalwa Wakhungu, Cabinet Secretary for Water, Environment and Natural Resources of Kenya, to give a welcoming address. The Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, delivered opening remarks.

C. Election of the Co-Chairs

4. The Chair invited the experts to formally elect the nominated candidates, Charles Barber (United States of America) and Raymond Landveld (Suriname), as Co-Chairs of the Expert Group, which then elected the two nominated candidates by acclamation.

D. Opening remarks

5. The Co-Chairs thanked the experts for their expression of confidence, welcomed the participants and delivered opening remarks.

E. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

6. The Expert Group adopted the agenda for its first meeting (E/CN.18/AEG/2014/1) and the programme of work. It was noted that there would be no negotiated outcome and that the Co-Chairs would prepare a summary of the discussions. The complete text of the summary of the Co-Chairs is contained in the supplementary information to the present report. The summary provided by the Co-Chairs of the key points of the discussion held during the first meeting of the Expert Group is contained in the annex to this report.

7. The secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests introduced the relevant documents and distributed a compact disc including all of them. Those documents are also available on the Forum website.

F. Tasks of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group

8. The Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group will be guided by Forum resolution 10/2, as discussed above. It is expected to review the input provided by various stakeholders and the outcome of the independent assessment of the international arrangement on forests, as explained in that resolution and in the relevant terms of reference. On the basis of that review, the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group will, at its second meeting, put together a set of recommendations, providing a strategic direction on the function and institutional arrangements of the international arrangement on forests for the period beyond 2015, for proposal to the Forum at its eleventh session. In carrying out its mandate, the Expert Group should also take into account the connections with and implications of the deliberations on the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

G. Attendance and participation

9. The Expert Group was composed of more than 176 government-designated experts, from 71 countries, experts designated by member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, other international and regional organizations, regional processes and major groups, as well as independent experts. A full list of the participants will be issued as a separate document and posted on the Forum website.

III. Outcome of the first meeting of the Expert Group

10. The Expert Group took note of the outcome of its first meeting, including the summary by the Co-Chairs of the key points of the discussions, as contained in the annex to this report. The report, which was adopted by the Expert Group at its closing plenary session, held on 28 February 2014, will be transmitted to the Expert Group at its second meeting and will also be made available to the team undertaking the independent assessment of the international arrangement on forests.

IV. Closing of the first meeting of the Expert Group

11. During the closing session, experts from the Russian Federation, China, Guatemala, Switzerland, Mexico, Finland, South Africa, Kenya, the European Union and major groups made statements. The Co-Chairs thanked all of the experts for their active involvement in the discussions held during the meeting and expressed their satisfaction at the meeting results. They thanked the Bureau of the eleventh session and the secretariat of the Forum for organizing the meeting within the framework of a dynamic programme that enabled interactive discussions. The Co-Chairs also thanked the Government of Kenya for hosting the meeting and urged the continued engagement and cooperation of all countries, organizations and major groups at the eleventh session of the Forum, where a decision would be taken on the international arrangement on forests, taking into account the outcome of the meetings of the Expert Group. The Co-Chairs then announced the closure of meeting and the experts expressed their gratitude to the Co-Chairs by acclamation.

Annex

Summary by the Co-Chairs of the key points of the discussions held during the first meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Ad Hoc Expert Group on the International Arrangement on Forests

1. The experts recognized the importance of the review of the international arrangement on forests, given the very serious challenges still being faced by the world as regards its forests. They also recalled the provisions of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", on forests.[a] During the meeting, the experts discussed a wide range of options and areas for improvement in the future international arrangement on forests and emphasized the need to increase political commitment to sustainable forest management, catalyse implementation on the ground, promote cooperation and coordination on sustainable forest management, and integrate forests in the sustainable development goals and post-2015 development agenda. The part of the

[a] Paras. 193-196 of General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, which read:

"193. We highlight the social, economic and environmental benefits of forests to people and the contributions of sustainable forest management to the themes and objective of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. We support cross-sectoral and cross-institutional policies promoting sustainable forest management. We reaffirm that the wide range of products and services that forests provide creates opportunities to address many of the most pressing sustainable development challenges. We call for enhanced efforts to achieve the sustainable management of forests, reforestation, restoration and afforestation, and we support all efforts that effectively slow, halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation, including promoting trade in legally harvested forest products. We note the importance of such ongoing initiatives as reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. We call for increased efforts to strengthen forest governance frameworks and means of implementation, in accordance with the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, in order to achieve sustainable forest management. To this end, we commit to improving the livelihoods of people and communities by creating the conditions needed for them to sustainably manage forests, including by strengthening cooperation arrangements in the areas of finance, trade, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, capacity-building and governance, as well as by promoting secure land tenure, particularly with regard to decision-making and benefit-sharing, in accordance with national legislation and priorities.

"194. We call for urgent implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests on the occasion of the launch of the International Year of Forests.

"195. We recognize that the United Nations Forum on Forests, with its universal membership and comprehensive mandate, plays a vital role in addressing forest-related issues in a holistic and integrated manner, and promoting international policy coordination and cooperation to achieve sustainable forest management. We invite the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to continue its support to the Forum and encourage stakeholders to remain actively engaged in the work of the Forum.

"196. We stress the importance of integrating sustainable forest management objectives and practices into the mainstream of economic policy and decision-making, and to that end we commit to working through the governing bodies of member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to integrate, as appropriate, the sustainable management of all types of forests into their strategies and programmes."

summary by the Co-Chairs contained in the present annex aims to capture the key points made by the experts during the meeting. Section A summarizes the key points that were made in relation to the assessment of the current international arrangement on forests (achievements, strengths and weaknesses). Section B summarizes areas and options suggested for action or improvement. The Co-Chairs emphasize that the points and suggested actions are not exhaustive and do not necessarily reflect consensus, and that new options may be presented in the future.

A. Assessment of the current international arrangement on forests (achievements, strengths and weaknesses)

United Nations Forum on Forests

Achievements

- Promoted a universal approach to sustainable forest management, including through the adoption of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and its four global objectives on forests
- Strengthened political commitment to sustainable forest management including through ministerial engagement
- Raised the profile of forests in the global development agenda by influencing international policy agreements on forests in other forums (e.g., outcome documents of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development)
- Enhanced understanding of and collaboration on critical issues of financing through research on forest financing and the establishment of the facilitative process
- Provided a unique universal intergovernmental forum which holds a high-level global policy dialogue on sustainable management of all types of forests and trees outside forests, in an integrated and holistic manner
- Catalysed action by international organizations, including members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, to promote sustainable forest management
- Raised awareness of the importance of forests, including through the International Year of Forests and the International Day of Forests

Strengths

- Broad representativeness of the United Nations Forum on Forests, with its universal membership
- Great potential through its position within the United Nations system for coordinating with other United Nations bodies and Member States and integrating forests into the United Nations development agenda and the sustainable development goals
- Only global platform within the United Nations system for discussing the multifunctional role of forests in an integrated and holistic manner
- Provision for stakeholders involvement

- Holding of meetings of country-led initiatives and ad hoc expert groups which promote greater involvement of stakeholders and greater understanding of the issues critical for the process

Weaknesses

- Focus on negotiating texts
- Inability to facilitate and guarantee implementation on the ground
- Financing mechanisms and other means of implementation (including capacity-building, technology transfer and technical assistance) under the current international arrangement on forests are insufficient for effective support of the implementation of its resolutions (e.g., on the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests), especially with regard to thematic and geographical gaps
- Lack of clarity in the relationship with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests
- Promotion of sustainable forest management as a means of eradicating poverty through cross-sectoral coordination is still weak
- Little engagement with other sectors (such as agriculture, energy, infrastructure development and mining) that are major drivers of deforestation
- Lack of adequate resources and institutions to support the Forum mandates, including lack of adequate human and budgetary resources of the Forum secretariat
- Inadequate monitoring, assessment and reporting mechanism for the implementation of its resolutions
- Full involvement of major groups has still not been achieved

Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests/global objectives on forests

Achievements

- First ever globally agreed framework on sustainable management of all types of forests
- Important milestones, which brought global forest policy to a new stage
- Helped raise visibility of forests in other global policy forums
- Has provided a framework for national, regional and global actions on sustainable forest management
- Promoted a coherent approach to sustainable forest management through provision of a first explanation of the concept of sustainable forest management, and a plan of action on sustainable management of all types of forests
- Promoted the implementation of the forest-related conventions

Strengths

- Provides a common understanding of sustainable forest management and an overarching policy framework for sustainable forest management
- Contributed to strengthening political commitment to sustainable management of all types of forests at the global level
- May have contributed to a modest reduction in deforestation and a steady increase in the area of protected forests
- Has great potential for raising the profile of forests in the context of sustainable development and linking the global objectives on forests with the sustainable development goals

Weaknesses

- Difficult to assess its impact on Governments in respect of their giving priority to forests in national policies and practices
- Progress in its implementation is unsatisfactory and there is a lack of adequate means of implementation and reporting (including finance, capacity-building, technology transfer and technical assistance)
- Deforestation and forest degradation continue; although the rate of forest loss is slowing, it is difficult to attribute this directly to the non-legally binding instrument and the global objectives on forests
- Lack of progress towards achievement of the fourth global objective on forests has made it difficult to achieve sufficient progress towards achieving the other global objective on forests
- Does not take sufficient account of the contribution that indigenous people and other local communities can make to sustainable forest management
- Too "forest-centric": does not take sufficient account of emerging issues outside the dimension of forests (e.g., climate, water, bioenergy)
- Not well known outside — or even within — the forest sector
- Inadequate monitoring, assessment and reporting mechanism for its implementation
- Some countries cannot enforce the instrument owing to its non-legally binding nature, which also makes it harder to secure adequate means of implementation

Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Achievements

- Providing consolidated expert views on, and promoting, sustainable forest management (e.g., submission on "Rio+20 and Forests" to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development; forest days/Global Landscapes Forum within the framework of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change

- Joint programming, e.g., through the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD)
- Work on forest financing (including the CPF Sourcebook on Funding for Sustainable Forest Management, the 2012 Advisory Group on Finance study and the 2012 organization-led initiative on forest financing)
- Reliable source of forest information (e.g., the Global Forest Information System)
- Contributed to the harmonization of reporting, including through the Global Forest Resources Assessment and the joint forest sector questionnaire, and Global Forest Expert Panels
- Support to the country-led initiatives and holding of organization-led initiatives

Strengths

- Includes international organizations that can collect and provide information, provide technical support and mobilize financial resources to help implement Forum recommendations and decisions
- Members have complementary mandates: development, research, advocacy, political support, financing, data collection
- An informal, flexible and voluntary arrangement of partners that share a common goal

Weaknesses

- Does not always fulfil its mandate in respect of supporting the work of the Forum, including implementation at the national level, and in enhancing cooperation and coordination among its members
- Lacks an effective working modality and common programming and expectations
- Members have different agendas, mandates, priorities, workplans and governing bodies, which often results in varying levels of commitment, duplication and insufficient uptake of joint outputs
- Members often compete for external funds; the Collaborative Partnership on Forests itself does not have dedicated funds; expectations of the Partnership differ, both within the Partnership and externally
- Lack of engagement by Partnership governing bodies
- No mechanism for assessing to what extent the Partnership has responded to the Forum's call for action in its resolutions and decisions
- Lack of equitable burden- and credit-sharing among its members
- The high costs of seconding of staff by the Partnership to Forum sessions and the decrease in secondments from Partnership members

Regional processes and organizations

Achievements

- In some regions, work of regional processes entails undertaking extensive preparations at regional and subregional levels, prior to Forum sessions
- Harmonization of reporting for the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2015 through the Collaborative Forest Resources Questionnaire partnership developed with regional data-collection partners

Strengths

- Some regional processes help implement Forum resolutions and decisions, as they are closer to implementation of sustainable forest management, and benefit from local experience
- Serve as a bridge for promoting Forum objectives at regional and national levels

Weaknesses

- Weak interface between the Forum and regional organizations and processes, including the regional commissions
- Lack of synergy among regional and subregional processes in implementing the non-legally binding instrument/global objectives on forests and Forum resolutions and decisions
- Not all regions hold regular meetings or have used their potential for involvement in the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument

Major groups

Achievements

- Multi-stakeholder dialogue and major groups initiatives (in Brazil and Ghana)
- Enhanced coordination among major groups (including creation of the Major Groups Partnership on Forests)
- Bringing innovative ideas and different points of view to the political dialogue
- Active involvement of major groups has helped in respect of achieving progress in certain areas, such as combating illegal logging
- Submission of joint background/discussion papers to the Forum at its ninth and tenth sessions

Strengths

- Provide different perspectives on issues
- Make the process more transparent and increase ownership of resolutions and decisions
- Closer to on-the-ground implementation, with close links to communities; well placed to raise awareness on the international forest policy dialogue at the local level

- Can help promote follow-up actions on the ground at national and subnational levels

Weaknesses

- Forum is not attractive to many stakeholders, as they do not see any practical impact on the ground emanating from decisions
- Lack of sufficient funding to support full and effective participation of major groups in Forum and related meetings
- Some major groups can feel marginalized and unheard, especially when they have a low institutional capacity
- No mechanisms to implement recommendations related to and coming from major groups
- Private sector is largely absent from the Forum
- No representation of major groups in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

B. Areas and options suggested for actions or improvement

United Nations Forum on Forests

- Streamline and focus functions of the international arrangement on forests on the non-legally binding instrument/global objectives on forests and the Sustainable Development Goals/post-2015 development agenda
- Clarify the roles and mandate of the Forum and other components of the international arrangement on forests, with the Forum as a high-level policy platform and catalyst for implementation of the non-legally binding instrument
- Continue consideration of the option of a legally binding agreement
- Raise the profile and awareness of forests both within the United Nations (including in relation to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals process and the post-2015 development agenda) and at the regional and national levels
- Adopt a more cross-sectoral approach, recognizing that many of the drivers of deforestation lie outside the forest sector and the importance of a holistic approach to sustainable forest management
- Strengthen links with the "Rio Conventions" and other forest-related agreements, and cross-sectoral cooperation
- Consider updating the Forum mandate
- Consider development of a strategic plan to guide the work of the international arrangement on forests beyond 2015
- Inclusion of support for addressing special needs of small island developing States and low forest cover countries in the future workplan of the international arrangement on forests

- Review the reporting process and its periodicity, and synchronize it with the cycle of other relevant processes such as the Global Forest Resources Assessment
- Institute data-sharing arrangements with the Global Forest Resources Assessment, the International Tropical Timber Organization, criteria and indicators processes, etc., for better harmonization and minimization of reporting burdens
- Set up a "global forest indicators" partnership or platform
- Add a monitoring, assessment and reporting coordinator position within the Forum secretariat
- Use an ad hoc expert group, subsidiary implementation body or some other mechanism to review progress on implementation of the non-legally binding instrument after each reporting cycle
- Mainstream monitoring, assessment and reporting results into Forum decisions
- Note that substantive issues regarding the future status of the international arrangement on forests and the Forum should be determined before the reaching of decisions on, e.g., frequency of meetings: "form should follow function"
- Consider links with the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests/global objectives on forests

- Reaffirm the non-legally binding instrument and consider extending the global objectives on forests to 2025 and incorporating the potential forest-related targets of the sustainable development goals within the framework of the non-legally binding instrument and global objectives on forests
- Consider transition of the non-legally binding instrument under the Forum to legally binding agreement status
- Capitalize on the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument, applying different visions and tools
- Consider the need for developing an additional or additional global objectives on forests, including in such areas as governance, an enabling environment and poverty eradication
- Strengthen monitoring, assessment and reporting (through the Forum monitoring, assessment and reporting process) by establishing both a streamlined standard reporting format with a core set of indicators and a time-bound programme of work focused on specific aspects of the non-legally binding instrument, and identifying sets of achievable and measurable actions (linked to the Forum strategic plan)
- Advance implementation of the non-legally binding instrument and the global objectives on forests, through the carrying out of a gap analysis at the national and regional levels, comparing existing policies with actions set out in the non-legally binding instrument, so as to help identify areas of progress, and areas where more effort is required.

- Improve presentation of the non-legally binding instrument to facilitate wider understanding and its promotion

Forum secretariat

- Strengthen the secretariat and clarify the main secretariat functions, namely, to (a) support the intergovernmental process, (b) support the Collaborative Partnership on Forests as a Partnership member, (c) support the Partnership as its secretariat and (d) operate as part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, within the United Nations system
- Establish clear priorities for the secretariat and improve transparency in relation to priority-setting and budgets
- Develop a workplan for the use of regular budget and extrabudgetary funds based on priorities and capacity; develop a fundraising strategy to increase extrabudgetary resources
- Urge Collaborative Partnership on Forests and Forum members to second staff to the secretariat
- Increase the number of regular budget-financed posts

Collaborative Partnership on Forests

- Review and strengthen the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in consultation with Partnership members
- Invite Partnership members to contribute to a review of the international arrangement on forests
- Forum is to decide on ways of making the relationship with the Partnership more direct
- Consider establishing a task force, involving Partnership members and the Bureau of the eleventh session of the Forum, to evaluate the current structure and functions of the Partnership, and explore options for improvement (including a possible model based on that of UN-Water)
- Strengthen links between the Forum and the Partnership: clarify the role of the Partnership within the international arrangement on forests and its relationship to the Forum; establish basic guidelines on its method of work and operation; clarify, responsibilities, expertise, gaps, common expectations and division of labour, including for the Forum secretariat
- Governance of the Partnership should be revised through terms of reference that reflect the Partnership's mandate, priorities, procedures for increasing membership, arrangements for chairmanship and provision of secretariat functions
- Increase sense of ownership in the Partnership by engaging all members, stakeholders and non-Partnership organizations and processes
- Establish a Partnership trust fund, possibly administered by the Forum secretariat and supported by contributions from Forum members and budget allocations from Partnership members

- Urge members to incorporate the non-legally binding instrument and global objectives on forests, joint programmes and follow-up and implementation of Forum resolutions and decisions more explicitly in their programmes of work. Member States can ensure that this occurs through their representatives in the various governing bodies of Partnership members
- Consider the pros and cons of including additional members (e.g., the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Major Groups Partnership on Forests, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the International Forestry Students' Association), while recognizing the risk of the Partnership's becoming too big
- Group members around thematic clusters, based on different areas of expertise (as in the Advisory Group on Finance), so as to reduce competition, build on comparative advantages and increase commitment among members
- Strengthen the link between the Forum and the governing bodies of the Partnership member organizations
- Strengthen the science-policy interface with the Forum

Finance and other means of implementation

- Consider taking the facilitative process to the next level, e.g., by establishing a "global forest mechanism" (along the lines of the model of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa), to advise and help countries develop short-, medium- and long-term financing strategies for implementing sustainable forest management/the forest instrument/global objectives on forests; access financing from a range of sources; attract investment in sustainable forest management/the forest instrument/global objectives on forests; and connect with potential technical cooperation partners
- Consider setting up a unit within the Forum secretariat mandated to oversee this enhanced facilitative process, with a representative in New York, Rome or elsewhere to maximize synergies
- Consider the establishment of a global forest fund, linked to the sustainable forest management-related needs of developing countries, under the aegis of the Forum
- Make renewed efforts to address all sources of finance (including official development assistance, multilateral, bilateral, REDD+, the private sector, national forest funds, and the Global Forest Fund) including the better use of existing funds, as well as capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer, for implementation of sustainable forest management/the forest instrument/global objectives on forests
- Work together to mobilize contributions for funds (including through the Forum Trust Fund) to support, inter alia, countries preparing national reports, forest instrument implementation plans and public awareness strategies

- Consider using Forum trust funds to support, inter alia, countries in preparing national reports, non-legally binding instrument implementation plans, public awareness strategies
- Improve the enabling environments with a view to attracting investment in sustainable forest management

Regional processes and organizations

- Clarify roles for regional processes, including with regard to the modalities for their input into the Forum
- Consider looking beyond traditional regional processes towards engagement with other organizations at the regional and subregional levels (e.g., the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization)
- Suggest that regions incorporate Forum resolutions and decisions that relate to their priorities into their programmes of work
- Improve communication between the Forum and regional and subregional processes
- Clearly focus country-, region- and organization-led initiatives on specific work programme topics of the Forum
- Incorporate outcomes and recommendations of country-, region- and organization-led initiatives in reports of the Secretary-General
- Support travel of regional representatives to Forum sessions
- Organize "region days" at the Forum to highlight regional perspectives and promote regional success stories
- Develop Web-based regional communication tools (newsletters, portals, etc.)
- Add a regional liaison position within the Forum secretariat (see bullet point 4 above)
- Convene regional meetings in years in which Forum sessions are not held in coordination with regional bodies

Major groups

- Consider the scope within United Nations rules of procedure for addressing concerns of major groups regarding when and how major groups are given the floor
- Consider establishing an advisory group as an additional mechanism for strengthening stakeholder engagement through detailed discussion and consideration of the views of major groups and as a channel for input of major groups into the Forum
- Encourage Governments to collaborate with major groups at the national level, and include representatives of major groups in their official delegations to Forum meetings

- Increase the time allocated to multi-stakeholder dialogues
- In years when the Forum does not hold a session, regional meetings of the Forum could offer an opportunity to further engage participation of major groups
- Consider ways to ensure sufficient resources for participation of major groups in Forum sessions, and consider inviting them to join the Collaborative Partnership on Forests
- Consider creating networks of major groups to address cross-cutting forest-related issues, such as poverty reduction and women's, youths' and children's rights
- Encourage business and industry participation by raising the profile of the Forum in the private sector
- Forum secretariat capacity should be increased to facilitate greater engagement of major groups
- Consider undertaking a comparative review of how convention bodies, United Nations bodies and Collaborative Partnership on Forests members interact with major groups